

THE DIVINE TRUTH AND WAY

insists with a certain austere emphasis on the acceptance of the Godhead as the divine inhabitant in the human body. For he is the Immanent in all existences, and if the indwelling divinity is not recognised, not only will the divine meaning of individual existence be missed, the urge to our supreme spiritual possibilities deprived of its greatest force, but the relations of soul with soul in humanity will be left petty, limited and egoistic. Finally, it insists at great length on the divine manifestation in all things in the universe and affirms the derivation of all that is from the nature, power and light of the one Godhead. For that seeing too is essential to the God-knowledge; on it is founded the integral turn of the whole being and the whole nature Godwards, the acceptance by man of the works of the divine Power in the world and the possibility of remoulding his mentality and will into the type of the God-action, transcendent in initiation, cosmic in motive, transmitted through the individual, the Jiva.

The supreme Godhead, the Self immutable behind the cosmic consciousness, the individual Divinity in the human being and the Divine secretly conscious or partially manifested in cosmic Nature and all her works and creatures, are then one reality, one Godhead. But the truths that we can put forward the most confidently of one, are reversed or they alter their sense when we try to apply them to the other poises of the one Being. Thus the Divine is always the Lord, *Içwara*; but we cannot therefore

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crudely apply the idea of his essential lordship and mastery in exactly the same way without change in all four fields. As the Divine manifest in cosmic Nature he acts in close identity with Nature. He is himself then Nature, so to speak, but with a spirit within her workings which foresees and forewills, understands and enforces, compels the action, overrules in the result. As the one silent self of all he is the non-doer, and Nature alone is the doer. He leaves all these works to be done by her according to the law of our being, *swabhâvas tu pravartate*, and yet he is still the lord, *prabhu vibhu*, because he views and upholds our action and enables Nature to work by his silent sanction. He by his immobility transmits the power of the supreme Godhead through the compulsion of his pervading motionless Presence and supports its working by the equal regard of his witness Self in all things. As the supreme supra-cosmic Godhead he originates all; he is above all, compels all to manifest, but does not lose himself in what he creates or attach himself to the works of his Nature. His is the free presiding Will of being that is antecedent to all the necessities of the natural action. In the individual he is during the ignorance the secret Godhead in us who compels all to revolve on the machine of Nature on which the ego is carried round as part of the machinery, at once a clog and a convenience. But since all the Divine is within each being, we can rise above this relation by transcending the ignorance. For we can identify our-

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selves with the one Self supporter of all things and become the witness and non-doer. Or else we can put our individual being into the human soul's right relation with the supreme Godhead within us and make it in its parts of nature the immediate cause and instrument, *nimitta*, and in its spiritual self and person a high participant in the supreme, free and unattached mastery of that inner Numen. This is a thing we have to see clearly in the Gita; we have to allow for this variation of the sense of the same truth according to the nodus of relation from which its application comes into force. Otherwise we shall see mere contradiction and inconsistency where none exists or be baffled like Arjuna by what seems to us a riddling utterance.

Thus the Gita begins by affirming that the Supreme contains all things in himself, but is not in any, *matsthâni sarva-bhûtâni*, "all are situated in Me, not I in them," and yet it proceeds immediately to say, "and yet all existences are not situated in Me, my self is the bearer of all existences and it is not situated in existences." And yet again it insists with an apparent self-contradiction that the Divine has lodged himself, has taken up his abode in the human body, *mânuçîm tanum âçritam*, and that the recognition of this truth is necessary for the soul's release by the integral way of works and love and knowledge. These statements are only in appearance inconsistent with each other. It is as the supra-cosmic Godhead that he is not in existences, nor even

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they in him; for the distinction we make between Being and becoming applies only to the manifestation in the phenomenal universe. In the supracosmic existence all is eternal Being and all, if there too there is any multiplicity, are eternal beings, nor can the spatial idea of indwelling come in, since a supracosmic absolute being is not affected by the concepts of time and space which are created here by the Lord's Yogamaya. There a spiritual, not a spatial or temporal co-existence, a spiritual identity and coincidence must be the foundation. But on the other hand in the cosmic manifestation there is an extension of universe in space and time by the supreme unmanifest supracosmic Being, and in that extension he appears first as a self who supports all these existences; *bhûta-bhrit*, he bears them in his all-pervading self-existence. And, even, through this omnipresent self the supreme Self too, the Paramatman, can be said to bear the universe; he is its invisible spiritual foundation and the hidden spiritual cause of the becoming of all existences. He bears the universe as the secret spirit in us bears our thoughts, works, movements. He seems to pervade and to contain mind, life and body, to support them by his presence: but this pervasion is itself an act of consciousness, not material; the body itself is only a constant act of consciousness of the spirit.

This divine Self contains all existences; all are situated in him, not materially in essence, but in that extended spiritual conception of self-being of which

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our too rigid notion of a material and etheric space is only a rendering in the terms of the physical mind and senses. In reality all even here is spiritual co-existence, identity and coincidence; but that is a fundamental truth which we cannot apply until we get back to the supreme consciousness. Till then such an idea would only be an intellectual concept to which nothing corresponds in our practical experience. We have to say, then, using these terms of relation in space and time, that the universe and all its beings exist in the divine Self-existent as everything else exists in the spatial primacy of ether. "It is as the great, the all-pervading aerial principle dwells in the etheric that all existences dwell in Me, that is how you have to conceive of it," says the Teacher here to Arjuna. The universal existence is all-pervading and infinite and the Self-existent too is all-pervading and infinite; but the self-existent infinity is stable, static, immutable, the universal is an all-pervading movement, *sarvatragah*. The Self is one, not many; but the universal expresses itself as all existence and is, as it seems, the sum of all existences. One is Being; the other is Power of Being which moves and creates and acts in the existence of the fundamental, supporting, immutable Spirit. The Self does not dwell in all these existences or in any of them; that is to say, he is not contained by any,—just as the ether here is not contained in any form, though all forms are derived ultimately from the ether. Nor is he contained in or constituted by all

existences together—any more than the ether is contained in the mobile extension of the aerial principle or is constituted by the sum of its forms or its forces. But still in the movement also is the Divine ; he dwells in the many as the Lord in each being. Both these relations are true of him at one and the same time. The one is a relation of self-existence to the universal movement ; the other, the immanence, is a relation of the universal existence to its own forms. The one is a truth of being in its all-containing immutability, self-existent : the other is a truth of Power of the same being manifest in the government and information of its own self-veiling and self-revealing movements.

The Supreme from above cosmic existence leans, it is here said, or presses down upon his Nature to loose from it in an eternal cyclic recurrence all that it contains in it, all that was once manifest and has become latent. All existences act in the universe in subjection to this impelling movement and to the laws of manifested being by which is expressed in cosmic harmonies the phenomenon of the divine All-existence. The Jiva follows the cycle of its becoming in the action of this divine Nature, *prakṛitim māmikâm, swâm prakṛitim*, the “own nature” of the Divine. It becomes in the turns of her progression this or that personality ; it follows always the curve of its own law of being as a manifestation of the divine Nature, whether in her higher and direct or her lower and derived movement, whether in

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ignorance or in knowledge; it returns out of her action into her immobility and silence in the lapse of the cycle. Ignorant, it is subject to her cyclic whirl, not master of itself, but dominated by her, *avaçah prakṛiter vaçat*; only by return to the divine consciousness can it attain to mastery and freedom. The Divine too follows the cycle, not as subject to it, but as its informing Spirit and guide, not with his whole being involved in it, but with his power of being accompanying and shaping it. He is the presiding control of his own action of Nature, *adhyakṣha*,—not a spirit born in her, but the creative spirit who causes her to produce all that appears in the manifestation. If in his power he accompanies her and causes all her workings, he is outside it too, as if one seated above her universal action in the supracosmic mastery, not attached to her by any involving and mastering desire and not therefore bound by her works, because he infinitely exceeds them and precedes them, is the same before, during and after all their procession in the cycles of Time. All their mutations make no difference to his immutable being. The silent self that pervades and supports the cosmos is not affected by its changes because, though supporting, it does not participate in them. This greatest supreme supracosmic Self also is not affected because it exceeds and eternally transcends them.

But also since this action is the action of the divine Nature, *swâ prakṛitih*, and the divine Nature

can never be separate from the Divine, in everything she creates the Godhead must be immanent. That is a relation which is not the whole truth of his being, but neither is it a truth which we can at all afford to ignore. He is lodged in the human body. Those who ignore his presence, who despise because of its masks the divinity in the human form, are bewildered and befooled by the appearances of Nature and they cannot realise that there is the secret Godhead within, whether conscious in humanity as in the Avatar or veiled by his Maya. Those who are great-souled, who are not shut up in their idea of ego, who open themselves to the indwelling Divinity, know that the secret spirit in man which appears here bounded by the limited human nature, is the same ineffable splendour which we worship beyond as the supreme Godhead. They become aware of the highest status of him in which he is master and lord of all existences and yet see that in each existence he is still the supreme Deity and the indwelling Godhead. All the rest is a self-limitation for the manifesting of the variations of Nature in the cosmos. They see too that as it is his Nature which has become all that is in the universe, everything here is in its inner fact nothing but one Divine, all is Vasudeva, and they worship him not only as the supreme Godhead beyond, but here in the world, in his oneness and in every separate being. They see this truth and in this truth they live and act; him they adore, live, serve both as the Transcendent of things

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and as God in the world and as the Godhead in all that is, serve him with works of sacrifice, seek him out by knowledge, see nothing else but him everywhere and lift their whole being to him both in its self and in all its inward and outward nature. This they know to be the large and perfect way ; for it is the way of the whole truth of the one supreme and universal and individual Godhead.*

* IX 4—11, 13—15, 34.

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This then is the integral truth, the highest and widest knowledge. The Divine is supracosmic, the eternal Parabrahman who supports with his timeless and spaceless existence all this cosmic manifestation of his own being and nature in Space and Time. He is the supreme spirit who ensouls the forms and movements of the universe, Paramatman. He is the supernal Person of whom all self and nature, all being and becoming in this or any universe are the self-conception and the self-energising, Purushottama. He is the ineffable Lord of all existence who by his spiritual control of his own manifested Power in Nature unrolls the cycles of the world and the natural evolution of creatures in the cycles, Parameshwara. From him the Jiva, individual spirit, soul in Nature, existent by his being, conscious by the light of his consciousness, empowered to knowledge, to will and to action by his will and power, enjoying existence by his divine enjoyment of the cosmos, has come here into the cosmic rounds.

The inner soul in man is here a partial self-manifestation of the Divine, self-limited for the works of his Nature in the universe, *prakṛitir jīva-bhūta*. In his spiritual essence the individual is one with the Divine. In the works of the divine Prakriti he is one with him, yet there is an operative difference and many deep relations with God in Nature and

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with God above cosmic Nature. In the works of the lower appearance of Prakriti he seems by an ignorance and egoistic separation to be quite other than the One and to think, will, act, enjoy in this separative consciousness for the egoistic pleasure and purpose of his personal existence in the universe and its surface relations with other embodied minds and lives. But in fact all his being, all his thinking, all his willing and action and enjoyment are only a reflection—egoistic and perverted so long as he is in the ignorance—of the Divine's being, the Divine's thought, will, action and enjoyment of Nature. To get back to this truth of himself is his direct means of salvation, his largest and nearest door of escape from subjection to the Ignorance. Since he is a spirit, a soul with a nature of mind and reason, of will and dynamic action, of emotion and sensation and life's seeking for the delight of existence, it is by turning all these powers Godwards that the return to the highest truth of himself can be made entirely possible. He must know with the knowledge of the supreme Self and Brahman; he must turn his love and adoration to the supreme Person; he must subject his will and works to the supreme Lord of cosmos. Then he passes from the lower to the divine Nature: he casts from him the thought and will and works of the Ignorance and thinks, wills and works in his divine identity as soul of that Soul, power and light of that Spirit; he enjoys all the inner infinite of the Divine and no longer only these out-

ward touches, masks and appearances. Thus divinely living, thus directing his whole self and soul and nature Godwards, he is taken up into the truest truth of the supreme Brahman.

To know Vasudeva as all and live in that knowledge is the secret. He knows him as the Self, immutable, continent of all as well as immanent in all things. He draws back from the confused and perturbed whirl of the lower nature to dwell in the still and inalienable calm and light of the self-existent spirit. There he realises a constant unity with this self of the Divine that is present in all existences and supports all cosmic movement and action and phenomenon. He looks upward from this eternal unchanging spiritual hypostasis of the mutable universe to the greater Eternal, the supracosmic, the Real. He knows him as the divine Inhabitant in all things that are, the Lord in the heart of man, the secret Ishwara, and removes the veil between his natural being and this inner spiritual Master of his being. He makes his will, thought and works one in knowledge with the Ishwara's, attuned by an ever present realisation to the sense of the indwelling Divinity, sees and adores him in all and changes the whole human action to the highest meaning of the divine nature. He knows him as the source and the substance of all that is around him in the universe. All things that are he sees as at once in their appearance the veils and in their secret trend the means and signs of self-manifestation of that one unthinkable

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Reality and everywhere discovers that oneness, Brahman, Purusha, Atman, Vasudeva, the Being that has become all these creatures. Therefore too his whole inner existence comes into tune and harmony with the Infinite now self-revealed in all that lives or is within and around him and his whole outer existence turns into an exact instrumentation of the cosmic purpose. He looks up through the Self to the Parabrahman who there and here is the one and only existence. He looks up through the divine Inhabitant in all to that supernal Person who in his supreme status is beyond all habitation. He looks up through the Lord manifested in the universe to the Supreme who exceeds and rules all his manifestation. Thus he arises through a limitless unfolding of knowledge and upward vision and aspiration to that to which he has turned with an all-compelling integrality, *sarvabhâvena*.

This integral turning of the soul Godwards bases royally the Gita's synthesis of knowledge and works and devotion. To know God thus integrally is to know him as One in the self and in all manifestation and beyond all manifestation,—and all this unitedly and at once. And yet even so to know him is not enough unless it is accompanied by an intense uplifting of the heart and soul Godwards, unless it kindles a one-pointed and at the same time all-embracing love, adoration, aspiration. Indeed the knowledge which is not companioned by an aspiration and vivified by an uplifting is no

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true knowledge, for it can be only an intellectual seeing and a barren cognitive endeavour. The vision of God brings infallibly the adoration and passionate seeking of the Divine,—a passion for the Divine in his self-existent being but also for the Divine in ourselves and for the Divine in all that is. To know with the intellect is simply to understand and may be an effective starting-point,—or, too, it may not be and it will not be if there is no sincerity in the knowledge, no urge towards inner realisation in the will, no power upon the soul, no call in the spirit: for that would mean that the brain has externally understood, but inwardly the soul has seen nothing. True knowledge is to know with the inner being, and when the inner being is touched by the light, then it arises to embrace that which is seen, it yearns to possess, it struggles to shape that in itself and itself to it, it labours to become one with the glory of its vision. Knowledge in this sense is an awakening to identity and, since the inner being realises itself by consciousness and delight, by love, by possession and oneness with whatever of itself it has seen, knowledge awakened must bring an over-mastering impulse towards this true and only perfect realisation. Here that which is known is not an externalised object, but the divine Purusha, self and lord of all that we are. An all-seizing delight in him and a deep and moved love and adoration of him must be the inevitable result and is the very soul of this knowledge. And this adoration is no isolated

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seeking of the heart, but an offering of the whole existence. Therefore it must take also the form of a sacrifice; there is a giving of all our works to the Ishwara, there is a surrender of all our active inward and outward nature to the Godhead of our adoration in its every subjective and in its every objective movement. All our subjective workings move in him and they seek him, the Lord and Self, as the source and goal of their power and endeavour. All our objective workings move out towards him in the world and make him their object, initiate a service of God in the world of which the controlling power is the Divinity within us in whom we are one self with the universe and its creatures. For both world and self, Nature and the soul in her are enlightened by the consciousness of the One, are inner and outer bodies of the transcendent Purushottama. So comes a synthesis of mind and heart and will in the one self and spirit and with it the synthesis of knowledge, love and works in this integral union, this embracing God-realisation, this divine Yoga.

But to arrive at this movement at all is difficult for the ego-bound nature. And to arrive at its victorious and harmonious integrality is not easy even when we have set our feet on the way finally and forever. Mortal mind is bewildered by its ignorant reliance upon veils and appearances; it sees only the outward human body, human mind, human way of living and catches no liberating glimpse of the Divinity who is lodged in the creature. It

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ignores the divinity within itself and cannot see it in other men, and even though the Divine manifest himself in humanity as Avatar and Vibhuti, it is still blind and ignores or despises the veiled Godhead, *avajânanti mâm mûdhâ mânushîm tanum âçritam*. And if it ignores him in the living creature, still less can it see him in the objective world on which it looks from its prison of separative ego through the barred windows of the finite mind. It does not see God in the universe; it knows nothing of the supreme Divinity who is master of these planes full of various existences and dwells within them; it is blind to the vision by which all in the world grows divine and the soul itself awakens to its own inherent divinity and becomes of the Godhead, godlike. What it does see readily, and to that it attaches itself with passion, is only the life of the ego hunting after finite things for their own sake and for the satisfaction of the earthly hunger of the intellect, body, senses. Those who have given themselves up too entirely to this outward drive of the mentality, fall into the hands of the lower nature, cling to it and make it their foundation. They become a prey to the nature of the Rakshasa in man who sacrifices everything to a violent and inordinate satisfaction of his separate vital ego and makes that the dark godhead of his will and thought and action and enjoyment. Or they are hurried onward in a fruitless cycle by the arrogant self-will, self-sufficient thought, self-regarding act, self-satisfied and yet ever unsatisfied

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intellectualised appetite of enjoyment of the Asuric nature. But to live persistently in this separative ego consciousness and make that the centre of all our activities is to miss altogether the true self-awareness. The charm it throws upon the misled instruments of the spirit is an enchantment that chains life to a profitless circling. All its hope, action, knowledge are vain things when judged by the divine and eternal standard, for it shuts out the great hope, excludes the liberating action, banishes the illuminating knowledge. It is a false knowledge that sees the phenomenon but misses the truth of the phenomenon, a blind hope that chases after the transient but misses the eternal, a sterile action whose every profit is annulled by loss and amounts to a perennial labour of Sisyphus.*

The great-souled who open themselves to the light and largeness of the diviner nature of which man is capable, are alone on the path narrow in the beginning, inexpressibly wide in the end that leads to liberation and perfection. The growth of the god in man is man's proper business; the steadfast turning of this lower Asuric and Rakshasic into the divine nature is the carefully hidden meaning of human life. As this growth increases, the veil falls and the soul comes to see the greater significance of action and the real truth of existence. The eye opens to the Godhead in man, to the Godhead in the world ;

* IX 11-12

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it sees inwardly and comes to know outwardly the infinite Spirit, the Imperishable from whom all existences originate and who exists in all and by him and in him all exist always. Therefore when this vision, this knowledge seizes on the soul, its whole life aspiration becomes a surpassing love and fathomless adoration of the Divine and Infinite. The mind attaches itself singly to the eternal, the spiritual, the living, the universal, the Real; it values nothing but for its sake, it delights only in the all-blissful Purusha. All the word and all the thought become one hymning of the universal greatness, Light, Beauty, Power and Truth that has revealed itself in its glory to the human spirit and a worship of the one supreme Soul and infinite Person. All the long stress of the inner self to break outward becomes a form now of spiritual endeavour and aspiration to possess the Divine in the soul and realise the Divine in the nature. All life becomes a constant Yoga and unification of that Divine and this human spirit. This is the manner of the integral devotion ; it creates a single uplifting of our whole being and nature through sacrifice by the dedicated heart to the eternal Purushottama.*

Those who lay a predominant stress on knowledge, arrive to the same point by an always increasing, engrossing, enforcing power of the vision of the Divine on the soul and the nature. Theirs is the

* IX 13, 14

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sacrifice of knowledge and by an ineffable ecstasy of knowledge they come to the adoration of the Purushottama, *jñâna-yajñena yajanto mām upâsate*. This is a comprehension filled with Bhakti, because it is integral in its instruments, integral in its objective. It is not a pursuit of the Supreme merely as an abstract unity or an indeterminable Absolute. It is a heart-felt seeking and seizing of the Supreme and the Universal, a pursuit of the Infinite in his infinity and of the Infinite in all that is finite, a vision and embracing of the One in his oneness and of the One in all his several principles, his innumerable visages, forces, forms, here, there, everywhere, timelessly and in time, multiply, multitudinously, in endless aspects of his Godhead, in beings without number, all his million universal faces fronting us in the world and its creatures, *ekātvena prīthaktvena bahudhâ viçwatomukham*. This knowledge becomes easily an adoration, a large devotion, a vast self-giving, an integral self-offering because it is the knowledge of a Spirit, the contact of a Being, the embrace of a supreme and universal Soul which claims all that we are even as it lavishes on us when we approach it all the treasures of its endless delight of existence.†

The way of works too turns into an adoration and a devotion of self-giving because it is an entire sacrifice of all our will and its activities to the one

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Purushottama. The outward Vedic rite is a powerful symbol, effective for a slighter though still a heavenward purpose; but the real sacrifice is that inner oblation in which the Divine All becomes himself the ritual action, the sacrifice and every single circumstance of the sacrifice. All the working and forms of that inner rite are the self-ordinance and self-expression of his power in us mounting by our aspiration towards the source of its energies. The Divine Inhabitant becomes himself the flame and the offering, because the flame is the Godward will and that will is God himself within us. And the offering too is form and force of the constituent Godhead in our nature and being; all that has been received from him is given up to the service and the worship of its own Reality, its own supreme Truth and Origin. The Divine Thinker becomes himself the sacred mantra; it is the Light of his being that expresses itself in the thought directed Godward and is effective in the revealing word of splendour that enshrines the thought's secret and in the rhythm that repeats for man the rhythms of the Eternal. The illumining Godhead is himself the Veda and that which is made known by the Veda. He is both the knowledge and the object of the knowledge. The Rik, the Yajur, the Sama, the word of illumination which lights up the mind with the rays of knowledge, the word of power for the right ordaining of action, the word of calm and harmonious attainment for the bringing of the divine desire of the spirit, are

themselves the Brahman, the Godhead. The mantra of the divine consciousness brings its light of revelation, the mantra of the divine Power its will of effectuation, the mantra of the divine Ananda its equal fulfilment of the spiritual delight of existence. All word and thought are an outflowing of the great OM,—OM, the Word, the Eternal. Manifest in the forms of sensible objects, manifest in that conscious play of creative self-conception of which forms and objects are the figures, manifest behind in the self-gathered superconscient power of the Infinite, OM is the sovereign source, seed, womb of thing and idea, form and name,—it is itself, integrally, the supreme Intangible, the original Unity, the timeless Mystery self-existent above all manifestation in supernal being.* This sacrifice is therefore at once works and adoration and knowledge.†

To the soul that thus knows, adores, offers up all its workings in a great self-surrender of its being to the Eternal, God is all and all is the Godhead. It knows God as the Father of this world who nourishes and cherishes and watches over his children. It knows God as the divine Mother who holds us in her bosom, lavishes upon us the sweetness of her love and fills the universe with her forms

* AUM,—A the spirit of the gross and external, Virat, U the spirit of the subtle and internal, Taijasa, M the spirit of the secret super conscient omnipotence, Prajna, OM the Absolute, Turiya.—Mandukya Upanishad.

† IX 16, 17

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of beauty. It knows him as the first Creator from whom has originated all that originates and creates in space and time and relation. It knows him as the Master and ordainer of all universal and of every individual dispensation. The world and fate and uncertain eventuality cannot terrify, the aspect of suffering and evil cannot bewilder the man who has surrendered himself to the Eternal. God to the soul that sees is the path and God is the goal of his journey, a path in which there is no self-losing and a goal to which his wisely guided steps are surely arriving at every moment. He knows the Godhead as the master of his and all being, the upholder of his nature, the husband of the nature-soul, its lover and cherisher, the inner witness of all his thoughts and actions. God is his house and country, the refuge of his seekings and desires, the wise and close and benignant friend of all beings. All birth and status and destruction of apparent existences is to his vision and experience the One who brings forward, maintains and withdraws his temporal self-manifestation in its system of perpetual recurrences. He alone is the *imperishable seed* and origin of all that seem to be born and perish and their eternal resting-place in their non-manifestation. It is he that burns in the heat of the sun and the flame; it is he who is the plenty of the rain and its withholding; he is all this physical Nature and her workings. Death is his mask and immortality is his self-revelation. All that we call

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existent is he and all that we look upon as non-existent still is there secret in the Infinite and is part of the mysterious being of the Ineffable.*

Nothing but the highest knowledge and adoration, no other way than an entire self-giving and surrender to this Highest who is all, will bring us to the Highest. Other religion, other worship, other knowledge, other seeking has always its fruits, but these are transient and limited to the enjoyment of divine symbols and appearances. There are always open for our following according to the balance of our mentality an outer and an inmost knowledge, an outer and an inmost seeking. Outward religion is the worship of an outward deity and the pursuit of an external beatitude : its devotees purify their conduct from sin and attain to an active ethical righteousness in order to satisfy the fixed law, the Shashtra, the external dispensation ; they perform the ceremonial symbol of the outer communion. But their object is to secure after the mortal pleasure and pain of earthly life the bliss of heavenly worlds, a greater happiness than earth can give but still a personal and mundane enjoyment though in a larger world than the field of this limited and suffering terrestrial nature. And to that to which they aspire, they attain by faith and right endeavour ; for material existence and earthly activities are not the whole scope of our personal becoming or the whole formula of the

cosmos. Other worlds there are of a larger felicity, *swargalokam viçâlam*. Thus the vedic ritualist of old learned the exoteric sense of the triple Veda, purified himself from sin, drank the wine of communion with the gods and sought by sacrifice and good deeds the rewards of heaven. This firm belief in a Beyond and this seeking of a diviner world secures to the soul in its passing the strength to attain to the joys of heaven on which its faith and seeking were centred: but the return to mortal existence imposes itself because the true aim of that existence has not been found and realised. Here and not elsewhere the highest Godhead has to be found, the soul's divine nature developed out of the imperfect physical human nature and through unity with God and man and universe the whole large truth of being discovered and lived and made visibly wonderful. That completes the long cycle of our becoming and admits us to a supreme result; that is the opportunity given to the soul by the human birth and, until that is accomplished, it cannot cease. The God-lover advances constantly towards this ultimate necessity of our birth in cosmos through a concentrated love and adoration by which he makes the supreme and universal Divine the whole object of his living—not either egoistic terrestrial satisfaction or the celestial worlds—and the whole object of his thought and his seeing. To see nothing but the Divine, to be at every moment in union with him, to love him in all creatures and have the delight of him in all things is

the whole condition of his spiritual existence. His God-vision does not divorce him from life, nor does he miss anything of the fullness of life; for God himself becomes the spontaneous bringer to him of every good and of all his inner and outer getting and having, *yaga-kshema vahâmyaham*. The joy of heaven and the joy of earth are only a small shadow of his possessions; for as he grows into the Divine, the Divine too flows out upon him with all the light, power and joy of an infinite existence.*

Ordinary religion is a sacrifice to partial godheads, other than the integral Divinity. The Gita takes its direct examples from the old Vedic religion on its exoteric side as it had then developed; it describes this outward worship as a sacrifice to other godheads, *anya-devatâh*, to the gods, or to the divinised Ancestors, or to elemental powers and spirits, *devân, pitr'ân, bhûtâni*. Men consecrate their life and works ordinarily to partial powers or aspects of the divine Existence as they see or conceive them—mostly powers and aspects that ensoul to them things prominent in Nature and man or else reflect to them their own humanity in a divine exceeding symbol. If they do this with faith, then their faith is justified; for the Divine accepts whatever symbol, form or conception of himself is present to the mind of the worshipper, *yâm yâm tanum çraddhayâ archati*, as it is said elsewhere,—and meets him

* IX 20-22

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according to the faith that is in him. All sincere religious belief and practice is really a seeking after the one supreme and universal Godhead ; for he always is the sole master of man's sacrifice and askesis and infinite enjoyer of his effort and aspiration. However small or low the form of the worship, however limited the idea of the godhead, however restricted the giving, the faith, the effort to get behind the veil of one's own ego-worship and limitation by material Nature, it yet forms a thread of connection between the soul of man and the All-soul and there is a response. Still the response, the fruit of the adoration and offering is according to the knowledge, the faith and the work and cannot exceed their limitations, and therefore from the point of view of the greater God-knowledge, which alone gives the entire truth of being and becoming, this inferior offering is not given according to the true and highest law of the sacrifice. It is not founded on a knowledge of the supreme Godhead in his integral existence and the true principles of his self-manifestation, but attaches itself to external and partial appearances,—*na mâm abhijânanti tattwatah*. Therefore its sacrifice too is limited in its object, largely egoistic in its motive, partial and mistaken in its action and giving, *yajanti avidhi-pûrvaçam*. An entire seeing of the Divine is the condition of an entire conscious self-surrender ; the rest attains to things that are incomplete and partial and has to fall back from them and return to enlarge itself in a greater seeking and wider

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God-experience. But to follow after the supreme and universal Godhead alone and utterly is to attain to all knowledge and result which other ways acquire while yet one is not limited by any aspect, though one finds the truth of him in all aspects. This movement embraces all forms of divine being on its way to the supreme Purushottama.*

This absolute self-giving, this one-minded surrender is the devotion which the Gita makes the crown of its synthesis. All action and effort are by this devotion turned into an offering to the supreme and universal Godhead. "Whatever thou doest, whatever thou enjoyest, whatever thou sacrificest, whatever thou givest, whatever energy of tapasya, of the soul's will or effort, thou puttest forth, make it an offering unto Me." Here the least, the slightest circumstance of life, the most insignificant gift out of oneself or what one has, the smallest action assumes a divine significance and it becomes an acceptable offering to the Godhead who makes it a means for his possession of the soul and life of the God-lover. The distinctions made by desire and ego then disappear. As there is no straining after the good result of one's action, no shunning of unhappy result, but all action and result are given up to the Supreme to whom all work and fruit in the world belong for ever, there is no farther bondage. For by an absolute self-giving all egoistic desire disappears.

* IX 23-25

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from the heart and there is a perfect union between the Divine and the individual soul through an inner renunciation of its separate living. All will, all action, all result become that of the Godhead, work divinely through the purified and illumined nature and no longer belong to the limited personal ego. The finite nature thus surrendered becomes a free channel of the Infinite; the soul in its spiritual being, uplifted out of the ignorance and the limitation, returns to its oneness with the Eternal. The Divine Eternal is the inhabitant in all existences; he is equal in all and the equal friend, father, mother, creator, lover, supporter of all creatures. He is the enemy of none and he is the partial lover of none; none has he cast out, none has he eternally condemned, none has he favoured by any despotism of arbitrary caprice : all at last equally come to him through their circlings in the ignorance. But it is only this perfect adoration that can make this indwelling of God in man and man in God a conscious thing and an engrossing and perfect union. Love of the Highest and a total self-surrender are the straight and swift way to this divine oneness.*

The equal Divine Presence in all of us makes no other preliminary condition, if once this integral self-giving has been made in faith and in sincerity and with a fundamental completeness. All have access to this gate, all can enter into this temple :

* IX 26-29

WORKS, DEVOTION AND KNOWLEDGE

our mundane distinctions disappear in the mansion of the All-lover. There the virtuous man is not preferred, nor the sinner shut out from the Presence; together by this road the Brahman pure of life and exact in observance of the law and the outcaste born from a womb of sin and sorrow and rejected of men can travel and find an equal and open access to the supreme liberation and the highest dwelling in the Eternal. Man and woman find their equal right before God; for the divine Spirit is no respecter of persons or of social distinctions and restrictions: all can go straight to him without intermediary or shackling condition. "If" says the divine Teacher "even a man of very evil conduct turns to me with a sole and entire love, he must be regarded as a saint, for the settled will of endeavour in him is a right and complete will. Swiftly he becomes a soul of righteousness and obtains eternal peace." In other words a will of entire self-giving opens wide all the gates of the spirit and brings in response an entire descent and self-giving of the Godhead to the human being, and that at once reshapes and assimilates everything in us to the law of the divine existence by a rapid transformation of the lower into the spiritual nature. The will of self-giving forces away by its power the veil between God and man; it annuls every error and annihilates every obstacle. Those who aspire in their human strength by effort of knowledge or effort of virtue or effort of laborious self-discipline, grow with much anxious difficulty towards the Eternal; but

when the soul gives up its ego and its works to the Divine, God himself comes to us and takes up our burden. To the ignorant he brings the light of the divine knowledge, to the feeble the power of the divine will, to the sinner the liberation of the divine purity, to the suffering the infinite spiritual joy and Ananda. Their weakness and the stumblings of their human strength make no difference. "This is my word of promise" cries the voice of the Godhead to Arjuna, "that he who loves me shall not perish." Previous effort and preparation, the purity and the holiness of the Brahmin, the enlightened strength of the king-sage great in works and knowledge have their value, because they make it easier for the imperfect human creature to arrive at this wide vision and self-surrender; but even without this preparation all who take refuge in the divine Lover of man, the Vaishya once preoccupied with the narrowness of wealth-getting and the labour of production, the Shudra hampered by a thousand hard restrictions, woman shut in and stunted in her growth by the narrow circle society has drawn around her self-expansion, those too, *pâpa-yonayah*, on whom their past Karma has imposed even the very worst of births, the outcaste, the Pariah, the Chandala, find at once the gates of God opening before them. In the spiritual life all the external distinctions of which men make so much because they appeal with an oppressive force to the outward mind, cease before the

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equality of the divine Light and the wide omnipotence of an impartial Power.*

The earthly world preoccupied with the dualities and bound to the immediate transient relations of the hour and the moment is for man, so long as he dwells here attached to these things and while he accepts the law they impose on him for the law of his life, a world of struggle, suffering and sorrow. The way to liberation is to turn from the outward to the inward, from the appearance created by the material life which lays its burden on the mind and imprisons it in the grooves of the life and the body to the divine Reality which waits to manifest itself through the freedom of the spirit. Love of the world, the mask, must change into the love of God, the Truth. Once this secret and inner Godhead is known and is embraced, the whole being and the whole life will undergo a sovereign uplifting and a marvellous transmutation. In place of the ignorance of the lower Nature absorbed in its outward works and appearances the eye will open to the vision of God everywhere, to the unity and universality of the spirit. The world's sorrow and pain will disappear in the bliss of the All-blissful; our weakness and error and sin will be changed into the all-embracing and all-transforming strength, truth and purity of the Eternal. To make the mind one with the divine consciousness, to make

* IX 30-32

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the whole of our emotional nature one love of God everywhere, to make all our works one sacrifice to the Lord of the worlds and all our worship and aspiration one adoration of him and self-surrender, to direct the whole self Godwards in an entire union is the way to rise out of a mundane into a divine existence. This is the Gita's teaching of divine love and devotion, in which knowledge, works and the heart's longing become one in a supreme unification, a merging of all their divergences, an intertwining of all their threads, a high fusion, a wide identifying movement.*

* IX 33, 34

THE SUPREME WORD OF THE GITA

We have now got to the inmost kernel of the Gita's Yoga, the whole living and breathing centre of its teaching. We can see now quite clearly that the ascent of the limited human soul, when it withdraws from the ego and the lower nature into the immutable Self calm, silent and stable, was only a first step, an initial change. And now too we can see why the Gita from the first insisted on the Ishwara, the Godhead in the human form, who speaks always of himself, "*aham, mâm,*" as of some great secret and omnipresent Being, lord of all the worlds and master of the human soul, one who is greater even than that immutable self-existence which is still and unmoved for ever and abides for ever untouched by the subjective and objective appearances of the natural universe.

All Yoga is a seeking after the Divine, a turn towards union with the Eternal. According to the adequacy of our perception of the Divine and the Eternal will be the way of the seeking, the depth and fullness of the union and the integrality of the realisation. Man, the mental being, approaches the Infinite through his finite mind and has to open some near gate of this finite upon that Infinite. He seeks for some conception on which his mind is able to seize, selects some power of his nature which by force of an absolute self-heightening can reach out

and lay its touch on the infinite Truth that in itself is beyond his mental comprehension. Some face of that infinite Truth—for, because it is infinite, it has numberless faces, words of its meaning, self-suggestions—he attempts to see, so that by attaching himself to it he can arrive through direct experience to the immeasurable reality it figures. However narrow the gate may be, he is satisfied if it offers some prospect into the wideness which attracts him, if it sets him on the way to the fathomless profundity and unreachable heights of that which calls to his spirit. And as he approaches it, so it receives him, *ye yathâ mâm prapadyante*.

Philosophic mind attempts to attain to the Eternal by an abstractive knowledge. The business of knowledge is to comprehend and for the finite intellect that means to define and determine. But the only way to determine the indeterminable is by some kind of universal negation, *neti neti*. Therefore the mind proceeds to exclude from the conception of the Eternal all that offers itself as limitable by the senses and the heart and the understanding. An entire opposition is made between the Self and the not-self, between an eternal, immutable, indefinable self-existence and all forms of existence,—between Brahman and Maya, between the ineffable Reality and all that undertakes to express, but cannot express the Ineffable,—between Karma and Nirvana, between the ever continuous but ever impermanent action and conception of the universal Energy and some

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absolute ineffable supreme Negation of its action and conception which is empty of all life and mentality and dynamic significance. That strong drive of knowledge towards the Eternal leads away from everything that is transient. It negates life in order to return to its source, cuts away from us all that we seem to be in order to get from it to the nameless and impersonal reality of our being. The desires of the heart, the works of the will and the conceptions of the mind are rejected; even in the end knowledge itself is negated and abolished in the Identical and Unknowable. By the way of an increasing quietude ending in an absolute passivity the Maya-created soul or the bundle of associations we call ourselves enters into annihilation of its idea of personality, makes an end of the lie of living, disappears into Nirvana.

But this difficult abstractive method of self-negation, however it may draw to it some exceptional natures, cannot satisfy universally the embodied soul in man, because it does not give an outlet to all the straining of his complex nature towards the perfect Eternal. Not only his abstracting contemplative intellect but his yearning heart, his active will, his positive mind in search of some Truth to which his existence and the existence of the world is a manifold key, have their straining towards the Eternal and Infinite and seek to find in it their divine Source and the justification of their being and their nature. From this need arise the religions of love and works, whose strength is that they satisfy and

lead Godwards the most active and developed powers of our humanity,—for only by starting from these can knowledge be effective. Even Buddhism with its austere and uncompromising negation both of subjective self and objective things had still to found itself initially on a divine discipline of works and to admit as a substitute for bhakti the spiritualised emotionalism of a universal love and compassion, since so only could it become an effective way for mankind, a truly liberating religion. Even illusionist Mayavada with its ultralogical intolerance of action and the creations of mentality had to allow a provisional and practical reality to man and the universe and to God in the world in order to have a first foothold and a feasible starting-point; it had to affirm what it denied in order to give some reality to man's bondage and to his effort for liberation.

But the weakness of the kinetic and the emotional religions is that they are too much absorbed in some divine Personality and in the divine values of the finite. And, even when they have a conception of the infinite Godhead, they do not give us the full satisfaction of knowledge because they do not follow it out into its most ultimate and supernal tendencies. These religions fall short of a complete absorption in the Eternal and the perfect union by identity,—and yet to that identity in some other way, if not in the abstractive, since there all oneness has its basis, the spirit that is in man must one day arrive. On the other hand, the weakness

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of a contemplative quietistic spirituality is that it arrives at this result by a too absolute abstraction and in the end it turns into a nothing or a fiction the human soul whose aspiration was yet all the time the whole sense of this attempt at union ; for without the soul and its aspiration liberation and union could have no meaning. The little that this way of thinking recognises of his other powers of existence, it relegates to an inferior preliminary action which never arrives at any full or satisfying realisation in the Eternal and Infinite. Yet these things too which it restricts unduly, the potent will, the strong yearning of love, the positive light and all-embracing intuition of the conscious mental being are from the Divine, represent essential powers of him and must have some justification in their Source and some dynamic way of self-fulfilment in him. No God-knowledge can be integral, perfect or universally satisfying which leaves unfulfilled their absolute claim, no wisdom utterly wise which in its intolerant asceticism of search negates or in the pride of pure knowledge belittles the spiritual reality behind these ways of the Godhead.

The greatness of the central thought of the Gita in which all its threads are gathered up and united, consists in the synthetic value of a conception which recognises the whole nature of the soul of man in the universe and validates by a large and wise unification its many-sided need of the supreme and infinite Truth, Power, Love, Being to which our

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humanity turns in its search for perfection and immortality and some highest joy and power and peace. There is a strong and wide endeavour towards a comprehensive spiritual view of God and man and universal existence. Not indeed that everything without any exception is seized in these eighteen chapters, no spiritual problem left for solution; but still so large a scheme is laid out that we have only to fill in, to develop, to modify, to stress, to fellow out points, to work out hint and illuminate adumbration in order to find a clue to any further claim of our intelligence and need of our spirit. The Gita itself does not evolve any quite novel solution out of its own questionings. To arrive at the comprehensiveness at which it aims, it goes back behind the great philosophical systems to the original Vedanta of the Upanishads; for there we have the widest and profoundest extant synthetic vision of spirit and man and cosmos. But what is in the Upanishads undeveloped to the intelligence because wrapped up in a luminous kernel of intuitive vision and symbolic utterance, the Gita brings out in the light of a later intellectual thinking and distinctive experience.

In the frame of its synthesis it admits the seeking of the abstractive thinkers for the Indefinable, *anirdeshyam*, the ever unmanifest Immutable, *avyaktam aksharam*. Those who devote themselves to this search, find, they also, the Purushottama, the supreme Divine Person, *mâm*, the Spirit and highest

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Soul and Lord of things. For his utmost self-existent way of being is indeed an unthinkable, *achintya-rûpam*, an unimaginable positive, an absolute quintessence of all absolutes far beyond the determination of the intelligence. The method of negative passivity, quietude, renunciation of life and works by which men feel after this intangible Absolute is admitted and ratified in the Gita's philosophy, but only with a minor permissive sanction. This negating knowledge approaches the Eternal by one side only of the truth and that side the most difficult to reach and follow for the embodied soul in Nature, *kashtam dehavadbhir avapyate*; it proceeds by a highly specialised, even an unnecessarily arduous way, "narrow and difficult to tread as a razor's edge." Not by denying all relations, but through all relations is the Divine Infinite naturally approachable to man and most easily, widely, intimately seizable. This seeing is not after all the largest or the truest truth that the Supreme is without any relations with the mental, vital, physical existence of man in the universe, *avyavahâryam*, nor that what is described as the empirical truth of things, the truth of relations, *vyavahâra*, is altogether the opposite of the highest spiritual truth, *paramârtha*. On the contrary there are a thousand relations by which the supreme Eternal is secretly in contact and union with our human existence and by all essential ways of our nature and of the world's nature, *sarva-bhâvena*, can that contact

be made sensible and that union made real to our soul, heart, will, intelligence, spirit. Therefore is this other way natural and easy for man, *sukham âptum*. God does not make himself difficult of approach to us ; only one thing is needed, one demand made, the single indomitable will to break through the veil of our ignorance and the whole, the persistent seeking of the mind and heart and life for that which is all the time near to it, within it, its own soul of being and spiritual essence and the secret of its personality and its impersonality, its self and its nature. This is our one difficulty ; the rest the Master of our existence will himself see to and accomplish, *aham twâm mokṣhayishyâmi mâ suchah*.

In the very part of its teaching in which the Gita's synthesis leans most towards the side of pure knowledge, we have seen that it constantly prepares for this fuller truth and more pregnant experience. Indeed, it is implied in the very form the Gita gives to the realisation of the self-existent Immutable. That immutable Self of all existences seems indeed to stand back from any active intervention in the workings of Nature ; but it is not void of all relation whatever and remote from all connection. It is our witness and supporter ; it gives a silent and impersonal sanction ; it has even an impassive enjoyment. The many-sided action of Nature is still possible even when the soul is poised in that calm self-existence : for the witness soul is the immutable Purusha, and Purusha has always some relation with

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Prakriti. But now the reason of this double aspect of silence and of activity is revealed in its entire significance,—because the silent all-pervading Self is only one side of the truth of the divine Being. He who pervades the world as the one unchanging self that supports all its mutations, is equally the Godhead in man, the Lord in the heart of every creature, the conscient Cause and Master of all our subjective becoming and all our inward-taking and outward-going objectivised action. The Ishwara of the Yogins is one with the Brahman of the seeker of knowledge, one supreme and universal Spirit, one supreme and universal Godhead.

This Godhead is not the limited personal God of so many exoteric religions; for those are all only partial and outward formations of this other, this creative and directive, this personal side of his complete truth of existence. This is the one supreme Person, Soul, Being, Purusha of whom all godheads are aspects, all individual personality a limited development in cosmic Nature. This Godhead is not a particularised name and form of Divinity, *ishta-devatâ*, constructed by the intelligence or embodying the special aspiration of the worshipper. All such names and forms are only powers and faces of the one Deva who is the universal Lord of all worshippers and all religions: but this is itself that universal *Deity*, *deva-deva*. This Ishwara is not a reflection of the impersonal and indeterminable Brahman in illusive Maya: for from beyond all cos-

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mos as well as within it he rules and is the Lord of the worlds and their creatures. He is Parabrahman who is Parameswara, supreme Lord because he is the supreme Self and Spirit, and from his highest original existence he originates and governs the universe, not self-deceived, but with an all-knowing omnipotence. Nor is the working of his divine Nature in the cosmos an illusion whether of his or our consciousness. The only illusive Maya is the ignorance of the lower Prakriti which is not a creator of non-existent things on the impalpable background of the One and Absolute, but because of its blind encumbered and limited working misrepresents to the human mind by the figure of ego and other inadequate figures of mind, life and matter the greater sense, the deeper realities of existence. There is a supreme, a divine Nature which is the true creatrix of the universe. All creatures and all objects are becomings of the one divine Being ; all life is a working of the power of the one Lord ; all nature is a manifestation of the one Infinite. He is the Godhead in man ; the Jiva is spirit of his Spirit. He is the Godhead in the universe ; this world in Space and Time is his phenomenal self-extension.

In the unrolling of this comprehensive vision of existence and super-existence the Yoga of the Gita finds its unified significance and unexampled amplitude. This supreme Godhead is the one unchanging imperishable Self in all that is ; therefore to the spiritual sense of this unchanging imperishable self man

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has to awake and to unify with it his inner impersonal being. He is the Godhead in man who originates and directs all his workings; therefore man has to awake to the Godhead within himself, to know the divinity he houses, to rise out of all that veils and obscures it and to become united with this inmost Self of his self, this greater consciousness of his consciousness, this hidden Master of all his will and works, this Being within him who is the fount and object of all his various becoming. He is the Godhead whose divine nature, origin of all that we are, is thickly veiled by these lower natural derivations; therefore man has to get back from his lower apparent existence, imperfect and mortal, to his essential divine nature of immortality and perfection. This Godhead is one in all things that are, the self who lives in all and the self in whom all live and move; therefore man has to discover his spiritual unity with all creatures, to see all in the self and the self in all beings, even to see all things and creatures as himself, *âtmaupamyena sarvatra*, and accordingly think, feel and act in all his mind, will and living. This Godhead is the origin of all that is here or elsewhere and by his Nature he has become all these innumerable existences, *abhût sarva-bhûtâni*; therefore man has to see and adore the One in all things animate and inanimate, to worship the manifestation in sun and star and flower, in man and every living creature, in the forms and forces, qualities and powers of Nature,

vâsudevah sarvam iti. He has to make himself by divine vision and divine sympathy and finally by a strong inner identity one universality with the universe. A passive relationless identity excludes love and action, but this larger and richer oneness fulfils itself by works and by a pure emotion : it becomes the source and continent and substance and motive and divine purpose of all our acts and feelings. *Kasmai devâya havishâ vidhema*, to what Godhead shall we give all our life and activities as an offering? This is that Godhead, this the Lord who claims our sacrifice. A passive relationless identity excludes the joy of adoration and devotion ; but bhakti is the very soul and heart and summit of this richer, completer, more intimate union. This Godhead is the fulfilment of all relations, father, mother, lover, friend and refuge of the soul of every creature. He is the one supreme and universal Deva, Atman, Purusha, Brahman, Ishwara of the secret wisdom. He has manifested the world in himself in all these ways by his divine Yoga : its multitudinous existences are one in him and he is one in them in many aspects. To awaken to the revelation of him in all these ways together is man's side of the same divine Yoga.

To make it perfectly and indisputably clear that this is the supreme and entire truth of his teaching, this the integral knowledge which he had promised to reveal, the divine Avatar declares, in a brief re-iteration of the upshot of all that he has been saying,

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that this and no other is his supreme word, *paramam vachah*. "Again hearken to my supreme word" *bhûya eva çrinu me paramam vachah*. This supreme word of the Gita is, we find, first the explicit and unmistakable declaration that the highest worship and highest knowledge of the Eternal are the knowledge and the adoration of him as the supreme and divine Origin of all that is in existence and the mighty Lord of the world and its peoples of whose being all things are the becomings. It is, secondly, the declaration of a unified knowledge and bhakti as the supreme Yoga; that is the destined and the natural way given to man to arrive at union with the eternal Godhead. And to make more significant this definition of the way, to give an illuminating point to this highest importance of bhakti founded upon and opening to knowledge and made the basis and motive-power for divinely appointed works, the acceptance of it by the heart and mind of the disciple is put as a condition for the farther development by which the final command to action comes at last to be given to the human instrument, Arjuna. "I will speak this supreme word to thee" says the Godhead "from my will for thy soul's good, now that thy heart is taking delight in me," *te priyamânâyâ vakshyâmi*. For this delight of the heart in God is the whole constituent and essence of true bhakti, *bhajanti prâti-pûrvaçam*. As soon as the supreme word is given, Arjuna is made to utter his acceptance of it and to ask for a practical way of seeing God in all things in

Nature, and from that question immediately and naturally there develops the vision of the Divine as the Spirit of the universe and there arises the tremendous command to the world-action.*

The idea of the Divine on which the Gita insists as the secret of the whole mystery of existence, the knowledge that leads to liberation, is one that bridges the opposition between the cosmic procession in Time and a supracosmic eternity without denying either of them or taking anything from the reality of either. It harmonises the pantheistic, the theistic and the highest transcendental terms of our spiritual conception and spiritual experience. The Divine is the unborn Eternal who has no origin; there is and can be nothing before him from which he proceeds, because he is one and timeless and absolute. "Neither the gods nor the great Rishis know any birth of Me....He who knows me as the unborn without origin."...are the opening utterances of this supreme word. And it gives the high promise that this knowledge, not limiting, not intellectual, but pure and spiritual,—for the form and nature, if we can use such language, of this transcendental Being, his *swarûpa*, are necessarily unthinkable by the mind, *achintyarûpa*,—liberates mortal man from all confusion of ignorance and from all bondage of sin, suffering and evil, *yo vetti asammûd' ah sa martyeshu sarva-pâpaih pramuchyate*. The human soul that can dwell in the light of this supreme spiritual know-

* X. 1-18.

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ledge is lifted by it beyond the ideative or sensible formulations of the universe. It rises into the ineffable power of an all-exceeding, yet all-fulfilling identity, the same beyond and here. This spiritual experience of the transcendental Infinite breaks down the limitations of the pantheistic conception of existence. The infinite of a cosmic monism which makes God and the universe one, tries to imprison the Divine in his world manifestation and leaves us that as our sole possible means of knowing him ; but this Experience liberates us into the timeless and spaceless Eternal. “Neither the Gods nor the Titans know thy manifestation” cries Arjuna in his reply : the whole universe or even numberless universes cannot manifest him, cannot contain his ineffable light and infinite greatness. All other lesser God-knowledge has its truth only by dependence on the ever unmanifested and ineffable reality of the transcendent Godhead.

But at the same time the divine Transcendence is not a negation, nor is it an Absolute empty of all relation to the universe. It is a supreme positive, it is an absolute of all absolutes. All cosmic relations derive from this Supreme ; all cosmic existences return to it and find in it alone their true and immeasurable existence. “For I am altogether and in every way the origin of the gods and the great Rishis.” The gods are the great undying Powers and immortal Personalities who consciously inform, constitute, preside over the subjective and objective

forces of the cosmos. The gods are spiritual forms of the eternal and original Deity who descend from him into the many processes of the world. Multitudinous, universal, the gods weave out of the primary principles of being and its thousand complexities the whole web of this diversified existence of the One. All their own existence, nature, power, process proceeds in every way, in every principle, in its every strand from the truth of the transcendent Ineffable. Nothing is independently created here, nothing is caused self-sufficiently by these divine agents; everything finds its origin, cause, first spiritual reason for being and will to be in the absolute and supreme Godhead,—*aham âdih sarvaçah*. Nothing in the universe has its real cause in the universe; all proceeds from this supernal Existence.

The great Rishis, called here as in the Veda the seven original Seers, *maharshayah sapta pûrve*, the seven Ancients of the world, are intelligence powers of that divine Wisdom which has evolved all things out of its own self-conscious infinitude, *prajnâ puranî*,—developed them down the range of the seven principles of its own essence. These Rishis embody the all-upholding all-illuminating all-manifesting seven Thoughts of the Veda, *sâpta dhiyah*,—the Upanishad speaks of all things as being arranged in septettes, *sapta sapta*. Along with these are coupled the four eternal Manus, fathers of man,—for the active nature of the Godhead is fourfold and humanity expresses this nature in its fourfold

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character. These also, as their name implies, are mental beings. Creators of all this life that depends on manifest or latent mind for its action, from them are all these living creatures in the world; all are their children and offspring, *yeshâm loka imâh prajâh*. And these great Rishis and these Manus are themselves perpetual mental becomings of the supreme Soul* and born out of his spiritual transcendence into cosmic Nature,—originators, but he the origin of all that originates in the universe. Spirit of all spirits, Soul of all souls, Mind of all mind, Life of all life, Substance of all form, this transcendent Absolute is no complete opposite of all we are, but on the contrary the originating and illuminating Absolute of all the principles and powers of our and the world's being and nature.

This transcendent Origin of our existence is not separated from us by any unbridgeable gulf and does not disown the creatures that derive from him or condemn them to be only the figments of an illusion. He is the Being, all are his becomings. He does not create out of a void, out of a Nihil or out of an unsubstantial matrix of dream. Out of himself he creates, in himself he becomes; all are in his being and all is of his being. This truth admits and exceeds the pantheistic seeing of things. Vasudeva is all, *vâsudevah sarvam*, but Vasudeva is all that appears in the cosmos because he is too all that does not appear in it, all that is never manifested.

* Mad-bhâvâh mânasâ jâtâh.

His being is in no way limited by his becoming; he is in no degree bound by this world of relations. Even in becoming all he is still a Transcendence; even in assuming finite forms he is always the Infinite. Nature, Prakriti, is in her essence his spiritual power, self-power, *âtmashakti*; this spiritual self-power develops infinite primal qualities of becoming in the inwardness of things and turns them into an external surface of form and action. For in her essential, secret and divine order the spiritual truth of each and all comes first, a thing of her deep identities; their psychological truth of quality and nature is dependent on the spiritual for all in it that is authentic, it derives from the spirit; least in necessity, last in order the objective truth of form and action derives from inner quality of nature and depends on it for all these variable presentations of existence here in the external order. Or in other words, the objective fact is only an expression of a sum of soul factors and these go back always to a spiritual cause of their appearance.

This finite outward becoming is an expressive phenomenon of the divine Infinite. Nature is, secondarily, the lower Nature, a subordinate variable development of a few selective combinations out of the many possibilities of the Infinite. Evolved out of essential and psychological quality of being and becoming, *swabhâva*, these combinations of form and energy, action and movement exist for a quite limited relation and mutual experience in the cosmic

oneness. And in this lower, outward and apparent order of things Nature as an expressive power of the Godhead is disfigured by the perversions of an obscure cosmic Ignorance and her divine significances lost in the materialised, separative and egoistic mechanism of our mental and vital experience. But still here also all is from the supreme Godhead, a birth, a becoming, an evolution,* a process of development through action of Nature out of the Transcendent. *Aham sarvasya prabhavo mattahsarvam pravartate*; "I am the birth of everything and from me all proceeds into development of action and movement." Not only is this true of all that we call good or praise and recognise as divine, all that is luminous, sattwic, ethical, peace-giving, spiritually joy-giving, "understanding and knowledge and freedom from the bewilderment of the Ignorance, forgiveness and truth and self-government and calm of inner control, non-injuring and equality, contentment and austerity and giving." It is true also of the oppositions that perplex the mortal mind and bring in ignorance and its bewilderment, "grief and pleasure, coming into being and destruction, fear and fearlessness, glory and ingloriousness" with all the rest of the interplay of light and darkness, all the myriad mixed threads that quiver so painfully and yet with a constant stimulation through the entanglement of our nervous mind and its ignorant subjectivities. All here in their

* Prabhava, bhâva, pravrittî.

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separate diversities are subjective becomings of existences in the one great Becoming and they get their birth and being from Him who transcends them. The Transcendent knows and originates these things, but is not caught as in a web in that diversified knowledge and is not overcome by his creation. We must observe here the emphatic collocation of the three words from the verb *bhû*, to become, *bhavanti*, *bhâvâh*, *bhûtânâm*. All existences are becomings of the Divine, *bhûtâni*; all subjective states and movements are his and their psychological becomings, *bhâvâh*. These even, our lesser subjective conditions and their apparent results no less than the highest spiritual states, are all becomings from the supreme Being,* *bhavanti matta eva*. The Gita recognises and stresses the distinction between Being and becoming, but does not turn it into an opposition. For that would be to abrogate the universal oneness. The Godhead is one in his transcendence, one all-supporting Self of things, one in the unity of his cosmic nature. These three are one Godhead; all derives from him, all becomes from his being, all is eternal portion or temporal expression of the Eternal. In the Transcendence, in the Absolute, if we are to follow the Gita, we must look, not for a supreme negation of all things,

* Cf. the Upanishad, *âtmâ eva abhût sarvabhûtâni* the Self has become all existences, with this contained significance in the choice of the words, the Self-existent has become all these becomings.

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but for the positive key of their mystery, the reconciling secret of their existence.

But there is another supreme reality of the Infinite that must also be recognised as an indispensable element of the liberating knowledge. This reality is that of the transcendent downlook as well as the close immanent presence of the divine government of the universe. The Supreme who becomes all creation, yet infinitely transcends it, is not a will-less cause aloof from his creation. He is not an involuntary originator who disowns all responsibility for these results of his universal Power or casts them upon an illusive consciousness entirely different from his own or leaves them to a mechanical Law or to a Demiurge or to a Manichean conflict of Principles. He is not an aloof and indifferent Witness who waits impassively for all to abolish itself or return to its unmoved original principle. He is the mighty lord of the worlds and peoples, *lōka-maheṣwara*, and governs all not only from within but from above, from his supreme transcendence. Cosmos cannot be governed by a Power that does not transcend cosmos. A divine government implies the free mastery of an omnipotent Ruler and not an automatic force or mechanical law of determinative becoming limited by the apparent nature of the cosmos. This is the theistic seeing of the universe, but it is no shrinking and gingerly theism afraid of the world's contradictions, but one which sees God as the omniscient and omnipotent, the sole

original Being who manifests in himself all, whatever it may be, good and evil, pain and pleasure, light and darkness as stuff of his own existence and governs himself what in himself he has manifested. Unaffected by its oppositions, unbound by his creation, exceeding, yet intimately related to this Nature and closely one with her creatures, their Spirit, Self, highest Soul, Lord, Lover, Friend, Refuge, he is ever leading them from within them and from above through the mortal appearances of ignorance and suffering and sin and evil, ever leading each through his nature and all through universal nature towards a supreme light and bliss and immortality and transcendence. This is the fullness of the liberating knowledge. It is a knowledge of the Divine within us and in the world as at the same time a transcendent Infinite. An Absolute who has become all that is by his divine Nature, his effective power of Spirit, he governs all from his transcendence. He is intimately present within every creature and the cause, ruler, director of all cosmic happenings and yet is he far too great, mighty and infinite to be limited by his creation.

This character of the knowledge is emphasised in three separate verses of promise. "Whosoever knows me, says the Godhead, as the unborn who is without origin, mighty lord of the worlds and peoples, lives unbewildered among mortals and is delivered from all sin and evil. Whosoever knows

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in its right principles this my pervading lordship and this my Yoga, (the divine Yoga, *aiçwara Yoga*, by which the Transcendent is one with all existences even while more than them all and dwells in them and contains them as becomings of his own Nature,) unites himself to me by an untrembling Yoga..... The wise hold me for the birth of each and all, hold each and all as developing from me its action and movement, and so holding they love and adore me... and I give them the Yoga of the understanding by which they come to me and I destroy for them the darkness which is born of the ignorance.' These results must arise inevitably from the very nature of the knowledge and from the very nature of the Yoga which converts that knowledge into spiritual growth and spiritual experience. For all the perplexity of man's mind and action, all the stumbling, insecurity and affliction of his mind, his will, his ethical turn, his emotional, sensational and vital urgings can be traced back to the groping and bewildered cognition and volition natural to his sense-obscured mortal mind in the body, *sammoha*. But when he sees the divine Origin of all things, when he looks steadily from the cosmic appearance to its transcendent Reality and back from that Reality to the appearance, he is then delivered from this bewilderment of the mind, will, heart and senses, he walks enlightened and free, *asâmmûdhah martyeshu*. Assigning to everything its supernal and real and not any longer only its present and apparent value, he finds the

hidden links and connections ; he consciously directs all life and act to their high and true object and governs them by the light and power which comes to him from the Godhead within him. Thus he escapes from the wrong cognition, the wrong mental and volitional reaction, the wrong sensational reception and impulse which here originate sin and error and suffering, *sarva-pâpaih pramuchyate*. For living thus in the transcendent and universal he sees his own and every other individuality in their greater values and is released from the falsehood and ignorance of his separative and egoistic will and knowledge. That is always the essence of the spiritual liberation.

The wisdom of the liberated man is not then, in the view of the Gita, a consciousness of abstracted and unrelated impersonality, a do-nothing quietude. For the mind and soul of the liberated man are firmly settled in a constant sense, an integral feeling of the pervasion of the world by the actuating and directing presence of the divine Master of the universe, *etâm vibhûtim mama yo vetti*. He is aware of his spirit's transcendence of the cosmic order, but he is aware also of his oneness with it by the divine Yoga, *yogan cha mama*. And he sees each aspect of the transcendent, the cosmic and the individual existence in its right relation to the supreme Truth and puts all in their right place in the unity of the divine Yoga. He no longer sees each thing in its separateness,—the separate seeing that leaves all either unexplained

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or one-sided to the experiencing consciousness. Nor does he see all confusedly together, — the confused seeing that gives a wrong light and a chaotic action. Secure in the transcendence, he is not affected by the cosmic stress and the turmoil of Time and circumstance. Untroubled in the midst of all this creation and destruction of things, his spirit adheres to an unshaken and untrembling and unvacillating Yoga of union with the eternal and spiritual in the universe. He watches through it all the divine persistence of the Master of the Yoga and acts out of a tranquil universality and oneness with all things and creatures. And this close contact with all things implies no involution of soul and mind in the separative lower nature, because his basis of spiritual experience is not the inferior phenomenal form and movement but the inner All and the supreme Transcendence. He becomes of like nature and law of being with the Divine, *sâdharmyam âgatah*, transcendent even in universality of spirit, universal even in the individuality of mind, life and body. By this Yoga once perfected, undeviating and fixed, *avikampena yogena yujyate*, he is able to take up whatever poise of nature, assume whatever human condition, do whatever world-action without any fall from his oneness with the divine Self, without any loss of his constant communion with the Master of existence.*

This knowledge translated into the affective, emotional, temperamental plane becomes a calm

* *Sarvathâ vartamâno'pi sa yogî mayi vartate.*

love and intense adoration of the original and transcendental Godhead above us, the ever-present Master of all things here, God in man, God in Nature. It is at first a wisdom of the intelligence, the *buddhi*; but that is accompanied by a moved spiritualised state of the affective nature,† *bhâva*. This change of the heart and mind is the beginning of a total change of all the nature. A new inner birth and becoming prepares us for oneness with the supreme object of our love and adoration, *madbhâvâya*. There is an intense delight of love in the greatness and beauty and perfection of this divine Being now seen everywhere in the world and above it, *prîti*. That deeper ecstasy assumes the place of the scattered and external pleasure of the mind in existence or rather it draws all other delight into it and transforms by a marvellous alchemy the mind's and the heart's feelings and all sense movements. The whole consciousness becomes full of the Godhead and replete with his answering consciousness; the whole life flows into one sea of bliss-experience. All the speech and thought of such God-lovers becomes a mutual utterance and understanding of the Divine. In that one joy is concentrated all the contentment of the being, all the play and pleasure of the nature. There is a continual union from moment to moment in the thought and memory, there is an unbroken continuity of the experience of

† *Budhâ bhâva-samanvitâh.*

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oneness in the spirit. And from the moment that this inner state begins, even in the stage of imperfection, the Divine confirms it by the perfect Yoga of the will and intelligence. He uplifts the blazing lamp of knowledge within us, he destroys the ignorance of the comparative mind and will, he stands revealed in the human spirit. By the Yoga of the will and intelligence founded on an illumined union of works and knowledge the transition was affected from our lower troubled mind-ranges to the immutable calm of the witnessing Soul above the active nature. But now by this greater yoga of the Buddhi founded on an illumined union of love and adoration with an all-comprehending knowledge the soul rises in a vast ecstasy to the whole transcendental truth of the absolute and all-originating Godhead. The Eternal is fulfilled in the individual spirit and individual nature; the individual spirit is exalted from birth in time to the infinitudes of the Eternal.

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A very important step has been reached, a decisive statement of its metaphysical and psychological synthesis has been added to the development of the Gita's gospel of spiritual liberation and divine works. The Godhead has been revealed in thought to Arjuna; he has been made visible to the mind's search and the heart's seeing as the supreme and universal Being, the supernal and universal Person, the inward-dwelling Master of our existence for whom man's knowledge, will and adoration were seeking through the mists of the Ignorance. There remains only the vision of the multiple Virat Purusha to complete the revelation on one more of its many sides.

The metaphysical synthesis is complete. Sankhya has been admitted for the separation of the soul from the lower nature—a separation that must be effected by self-knowledge through the discriminating reason and by transcendence of our subjection to the three gunas constituent of that nature. It has been completed and its limitations exceeded by a large revelation of the unity of the supreme Soul and supreme Nature, *para purusha*, *parâ prakṛiti*. Vedanta of the philosophers has been admitted for the self-effacement of the natural separative personality built round the ego. Its method has been used to replace the little personal by the large impersonal

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being, to annul the separative illusion in the unity of the Brahman and to substitute for the blind seeing of the ego the truer vision of all things in one Self and one Self in all things. Its truth has been completed by the impartial revelation of the Parabrahman from whom originate both the mobile and the immobile, the mutable and the immutable, the action and the silence. Its possible limitations have been transcended by the intimate revelation of the supreme Soul and Lord who becomes here in all Nature, manifests himself in all personality and puts forth the power of his Nature in all action. Yoga has been admitted for the self-surrender of the will, mind, heart, all the psychological being to the Ishwara, the divine Lord of the nature. It has been completed by the revelation of the supernal Master of existence as the original Godhead of whom the Jiva is the partial being in Nature. Its possible limitations have been exceeded by the soul's seeing of all things as the Lord in the light of a perfect spiritual oneness.

There results an integral vision of the Divine Existent at once as the transcendent Reality, supra-cosmic origin of cosmos, as the impersonal Self of all things, calm continent of the cosmos, and as the immanent Divinity in all beings, personalities, objects, powers and qualities, the Immanent who is the constituent self, the effective nature and the inward and outward becoming of all existences. The Yoga

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of knowledge has been fulfilled sovereignly in this integral seeing and knowing of the One. The Yoga of works has been crowned by the surrender of all works to their Master,—for the natural man is now only an instrument of his will. The Yoga of love and adoration has been declared in its amplest forms. The intense consummation of knowledge and works, love conducts to a crowning union of soul and Over-soul in a highest amplitude. In that union the revelations of knowledge are made real to the heart as well as to the intelligence. In that union the difficult sacrifice of self in an instrumental action becomes the easy free and blissful expression of a living oneness. The whole means of the spiritual liberation has been given; the whole foundation of the divine action has been constructed.

Arjuna accepts the entire knowledge that has thus been given to him by the divine Teacher. His mind is already delivered from its doubts and seekings; his heart, turned now from the outward aspect of the world, from its baffling appearance to its supreme sense and origin and its inner realities, is already released from sorrow and affliction and touched with the ineffable gladness of a divine revelation. The language which he is made to use in voicing his acceptance is such as to emphasise and insist once again on the profound integrality of this knowledge and its all-embracing finality and fullness. He accepts first the Avatar, the Godhead in man who is speaking to him as the supreme Brahman,

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as the supracosmic All and Absolute of existence in which the soul can dwell when it rises out of this manifestation and this partial becoming to its source, *param brahma, param dhâma*. He accepts him as the supreme purity of the ever free Existence to which one arrives through the effacement of ego in the self's immutable impersonality calm and still for ever, *pavitram paramam*. He accepts him next as the one Permanent, the eternal Soul, the divine Purusha, *purusham çâçwatam divyam*. He acclaims in him the original Godhead, adores the Unborn who is the pervading, indwelling, self-extending master of all existence, *âdi-devam ajam vibhum*. He accepts him therefore not only as that Wonderful who is beyond expression of any kind, for nothing is sufficient to manifest him,—“neither the Gods nor the Titans, O blessed Lord, know thy manifestation,” *na hi te bhagavan vyaktim vidur devâ na dânavâh*,—but as the lord of all existences and the one divine efficient cause of all their becoming, God of the gods from whom all godheads have sprung, master of the universe who manifests and governs it from above by the power of his supreme and his universal Nature, *bhûta-bhâvana bhûteça deva-deva jagat-pate*. And lastly he accepts him as that Vasudeva in and around us who is all things here by virtue of the world-pervading, all-inhabiting, all-constituting master powers of his becoming, *vibhû-tayah*, “the sovereign powers of the becoming by which thou standest pervading these worlds,”

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*yâbhir vibhûtibhir lokân imâns twam vyapya
tishthasi.*

He has accepted the truth with the adoration of his heart, the submission of his will and the understanding of his intelligence. He is already prepared to act as the divine instrument in this knowledge and with this self-surrender. But a desire for a deeper constant spiritual realisation has been awakened in his heart and will. This is a truth which is evident only to the supreme Soul in its own self-knowledge, —for, cries Arjuna, “thou alone, O Purushottama, knowest thyself by thyself,” *âtmanâ âtmânam vettha*. This is a knowledge that comes by spiritual identity and the unaided heart, will, intelligence of the natural man cannot arrive at it by their own motion and can only get at imperfect mental reflections that reveal less than they conceal and disfigure. This is a secret wisdom which one must hear from the seers who have seen the face of this Truth, have heard its word and have become one with it in self and spirit. “All the Rishis say this of thee and the divine seer Narada, Asita, Devala, Vyasa.” Or else one must receive it from within by revelation and inspiration from the inner Godhead who lifts in us the blazing lamp of knowledge. *Swayanchaiva bravîshi me*, “and thou thyself sayest it to me.” Once revealed, it has to be accepted by the assent of the mind, the consent of the will and the heart’s delight and submission, the three elements of

• X. 12-15.

the complete mental faith, *çraddhâ*. It is so that Arjuna has accepted it; "all this that thou sayest, my mind holds for the truth." But still there will remain the need of that deeper possession in the very self of our being and out from its most intimate psychic centre, the soul's demand for that permanent inexpressible spiritual realisation of which the mental is only a preliminary or a shadow and without which there cannot be a complete union with the Eternal.

Now the way to arrive at that realisation has been given to Arjuna. And so far as regards the great self-evident divine principles, these do not baffle the mind; it can open to the idea of the supreme Godhead, to the experience of the immutable Self, to the direct perception of the immanent Divinity, to the contact of the conscient universal Being. One can, once the mind is illumined with the idea, follow readily the way and, with whatever preliminary difficult effort to exceed the normal mental perceptions, come in the end to the self-experience of these essential truths that stand behind our and all existence, *âtmanâ âtmânam*. One can do it with this readiness because these, once conceived, are evidently divine realities; there is nothing in our mental associations to prevent us from admitting God in these high aspects. But the difficulty is to see him in the apparent truths of existence, to detect him in this fact of Nature and in these disguising phenomena of the world's becoming; for here all is opposed to the sublimity of this

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unifying conception. How can we consent to see the Divine as man and animal being and inanimate object, in the noble and the low, the sweet and the terrible, the good and the evil? If, assenting to some idea of God extended in the things of the cosmos, we see him in ideal light of knowledge and greatness of power and charm of beauty and beneficence of love and ample largeness of spirit, how shall we avoid the breaking of the unity by their opposites which in actual fact cling to these high things and envelop them and obscure? And if in spite of the limitations of human mind and nature we can see God in the man of God, how shall we see him in those who oppose him and represent in act and nature all that we conceive of as undivine? If Narayana is without difficulty visible in the sage and the saint, how shall he be easily visible to us in the sinner, the criminal, the harlot and the outcast? To all the differentiations of the world-existence the sage, looking everywhere for the supreme purity and oneness, returns the austere cry, "not this, not this," *neti neti*. Even if to many things in the world we give a willing or reluctant assent and admit the Divine in the universe, still before most must not the mind persist in that cry "Not this, not this"? Here constantly the assent of the understanding, the consent of the will and the heart's faith become difficult to a human mentality anchored always on phenomenon and appearance. At least some compelling indications are needed, some links and

bridges, some supports to the difficult effort at oneness.

Arjuna, though he accepts the revelation of Vasudeva as all and though his heart is full of the delight of it,—for already he finds that it is delivering him from the perplexity and stumbling differentiations of his mind which was crying for a clue, a guiding truth amid the bewildering problems of a world of oppositions, and it is to his hearing the nectar of immortality, *amrîtam*,—yet feels the need of such supports and indices. He feels that they are indispensable to overcome the difficulty of a complete and firm realisation ; for how else can this knowledge be made a thing of the heart and life? He requires guiding indications, asks Krishna even for a complete and detailed enumeration of the sovereign powers of his becoming and desires that nothing shall be left out of the vision, nothing remain to baffle him. “Thou shouldst tell me” he says “of thy divine self-manifestations in thy sovereign power of becoming, *divyâ âtma-vibhûtayah*, all without exception,—*açeshena*, nothing omitted,—thy Vibhutis by which thou pervadest these worlds and peoples. How shall I know thee, O Yogin, by thinking of thee everywhere at all moments and in what pre-eminent becomings should I think of thee?” This Yoga by which thou art one with all and one in all and all are becomings of thy being, all are pervading or pre-eminent or disguised powers of thy nature, tell me of it, he cries, in its detail and extent, and tell me ever

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more of it; it is nectar of immortality to me, and however much of it I hear, I am not satiated. Here we get an indication in the Gita of something which the Gita itself does not bring out expressly, but which occurs frequently in the Upanishads and was developed later on by Vaishnavism and Shaktism in a greater intensity of vision, man's possible joy of the Divine in the world-existence, the universal Ananda, the play of the Mother, the sweetness and beauty of God's Lila.*

The divine Teacher accedes to the request of the disciple, but with an initial reminder that a full reply is not possible. For God is infinite and his manifestation is infinite. The forms of his manifestation too are innumerable. Each form is a symbol of some divine power, *vibhûti*, concealed in it and to the seeing eye each finite carries in it its own revelation of the infinite. Yes, he says, I will tell thee of my divine Vibhutis, but only in some of my principal pre-eminences and as an indication and by the example of things in which thou canst most readily see the power of the Godhead, *prâdhânyatah, uddeçatah*. For there is no end to the innumerable detail of the Godhead's self-extension in the universe, *nâsti anto vistarasya me*. This reminder begins the passage and is repeated at the end in order to give it a greater and unmistakable emphasis. And then throughout the rest of the chapter† we

* X. 16-18.

† X. 19-42.

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get a summary description of these principal indications, these pre-eminent signs of the divine force present in the things and persons of the universe. It seems at first as if they were given pell-mell, without any order, but still there is a certain principle in the enumeration, which, if it is once disengaged, can lead by a helpful guidance to the inner sense of the idea and its consequences. The chapter has been called the Vibhuti-Yoga,—an indispensable yoga. For while we must identify ourselves impartially with the universal divine Becoming in all its extension, its good and evil, perfection and imperfection, light and darkness, we must at the same time realise that there is an ascending evolutionary power in it, an increasing intensity of its revelation in things, a hierarchic secret something that carries us upward from the first concealing appearances through higher and higher forms towards the large ideal nature of the universal Godhead.

This summary enumeration begins with a statement of the primal principle that underlies all the power of this manifestation in the universe. It is this that in every being and object God dwells concealed and discoverable; he is housed as in a crypt in the mind and heart of every thing and creature, an inner self in the core of its subjective and its objective becoming, one who is the beginning and middle and end of all that is, has been or will be. For it is this inner divine Self hidden from the mind and heart which he inhabits, this luminous Inhabi-

tant concealed from the view of the soul in Nature which he has put forth into Nature as his representative, who is all the time evolving the mutations of our personality in Time and our sensational existence in Space,—Time and Space that are the conceptual movement and extension of the Godhead in us. All is this self-seeing Soul, this self-representing Spirit. For ever from within all beings, from within all conscient and inconscient existences, this All-conscient develops his manifested self in quality and power, develops it in the forms of objects, in the instruments of our subjectivity, in knowledge and word and thinking, in the creations of the mind and in the passion and actions of the doer, in the measures of Time, in cosmic powers and godheads and in the forces of Nature, in plant life, in animal life, in human and superhuman beings.

If we look at things with this eye of vision unblinded by differentiations of quality and quantity or by difference of values and oppositions of nature, we shall see that all things are in fact and can be nothing but powers of this manifestation, vibhutis of this universal Soul and Spirit, Yoga of this great Yogin, self-creations of this marvellous self-Creator. He is the unborn and the all-pervading Master of his own innumerable becomings in the universe, *ajo vibhuh* ; all things are his powers and effectuations in his self-Nature, vibhutis. He is the origin of all they are, their beginning ; he is their support in their ever-changing status, their middle ; he is their end

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too, the culmination or the disintegration of each created thing in its cessation or its disappearance. He brings them out from his consciousness and is hidden in them, he withdraws them into his consciousness and they are hidden in him for a time or for ever. What is apparent to us is only a power of becoming of the One: what disappears from our sense and vision is effect of that power of becoming of the One. All classes, genera, species, individuals are such vibhutis. But since it is through power in his becoming that he is apparent to us, he is especially apparent in whatever is of a pre-eminent value or seems to act with a powerful and pre-eminent force. And therefore in each kind of being we can see him most in those in whom the power of nature of that kind reaches its highest, its leading, its most effectively self-revealing manifestation. These are in a special sense Vibhutis. Yet the highest power and manifestation is only a very partial revelation of the Infinite; even the whole universe is informed by only one degree of his greatness, illumined by one ray of his splendour, glorious with a faint hint of his delight and beauty. This is in sum the gist of the enumeration, the result we carry away from it, the heart of its meaning.

God is imperishable, beginningless, unending Time; this is his most evident Power of becoming and the essence of the whole universal movement.

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Aham eva akṣayah kâlah. In that movement of Time and Becoming God appears to our conception or experience of him by the evidence of his works as the divine Power who ordains and sets all things in their place in the movement. In his form of space it is he who fronts us in every direction, million-bodied, myriad-minded, manifest in each existence; we see his faces on all sides of us. *Dhâtâ 'ham viçvato-mukḥah.* For simultaneously in all these many million persons and things, *sarva-bhûteshu*, there works the mystery of his self and thought and force and his divine genius of creation and his marvellous art of formation and his impeccable ordering of relations and possibilities and inevitable consequences. He appears to us too in the universe as the universal spirit of Destruction, who seems to create only to undo his creations in the end — "I am all-snatching Death," *aham mrîtyuh sarva-harah.* And yet his Power of becoming does not cease from its workings, for the rebirth and force of new creation ever keeps pace with the force of death and destruction, — "and I am too the birth of all that shall come into being." The divine Self in things is the sustaining Spirit of the present, the withdrawing Spirit of the past, the creative Spirit of the future.

Then among all these living beings, cosmic godheads, superhuman and human and subhuman creatures, and amid all these qualities, powers and objects, the chief, the head, the greatest in quality

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of each class is a special power of the becoming of the Godhead. I am, says the Godhead, Vishnu among the Adityas, Shiva among the Rudras, Indra among the gods, Prahlada among the Titans, Brihaspati the chief of the high priests of the world, Skanda the wargod, leader of the leaders of battle, Marichi among the Maruts, the lord of wealth among the Yakshas and Rakshasas, the serpent Ananta among the Nagas, Agni among the Vasus, Chitraratha among the Gandharvas, Kandarpa the love-God among the progenitors, Varuna among the peoples of the sea, Aryaman among the Fathers, Narada among the divine sages, Yama lord of the Law among those who maintain rule and law, among the powers of storm the Wind-God. At the other end of the scale I am the radiant sun among lights and splendours, the moon among the stars of night, the ocean among the flowing waters, Meru among the peaks of the world, Himalaya among the mountain-ranges, Ganges among the rivers, the divine thunderbolt among weapons. Among all plants and trees I am the Aswattha, among horses Indra's horse Uchchaihsravas, Airavata among the elephants, among the birds Garuda, Vasuki the snake-god among the serpents, Kamadhuk the cow of plenty among cattle, the alligator among fishes, the lion among the beasts of the forest. I am Margasirsha, first of the months; I am spring, the fairest of the seasons.

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In living beings, the Godhead tells Arjuna, I am consciousness by which they are aware of themselves and their surroundings. I am mind among the senses, mind by which they receive the impressions of objects and react upon them. I am their qualities of mind and character and body and action ; I am glory and speech and memory and intelligence and steadfastness and forgiveness, the energy of the energetic and the strength of the mighty. I am resolution and perseverance and victory, I am the sattwic quality of the good, I am the gambling of the cunning ; I am the mastery and power of all who rule and tame and vanquish and the policy of all who succeed and conquer ; I am the silence of things secret, the knowledge of the knower, the logic of those who debate. I am the letter A among letters, the dual among compounds, the sacred syllable O M among words, the Gayatri among metres, the Sama-veda among the Vedas and the great Sama among the mantras. I am Time the head of all reckoning to those who reckon and measure. I am spiritual knowledge among the many philosophies, arts and sciences. I am all the powers of the human being and all the energies of the universe and its creatures.

Those in whom my powers rise to the utmost heights of human attainment are myself always, my special Vibhutis. I am among men the king of men, the leader, the mighty man, the hero. I am Rama among warriors, Krishna among the Vrishnis,

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Arjuna among the Pandavas. The illumined Rishi is my Vibhuti; I am Bhṛigu among the great Rishis. The great seer, the inspired poet who sees and reveals the truth by the light of the idea and sound of the word, is myself luminous in the mortal; I am Ushanas among the seer-poets. The great sage, thinker, philosopher is my power among men, my own vast intelligence; I am Vyasa among the sages. But, with whatever variety of degree in manifestation, all beings are in their own way and nature powers of the godhead; nothing moving or un-moving, animate or inanimate in the world can be without me. I am the divine seed of all existences, and of that seed they are the branches and flowers; what is in the seed of self, that only they can develop in Nature. There is no numbering or limit to my divine Vibhutis; what I have spoken, is nothing more than a summary development and I have given only the light of a few leading indications and a strong opening to endless verities. Whatever beautiful and glorious creature thou seest in the world, whatever being is mighty and forceful among men and above man and below him, know to be a very splendour, light, and energy of Me and born of a potent portion and intense power of my existence. But what need is there of a multitude of details for this knowledge? Take it thus, that I am here in this world and everywhere, I am in all and I constitute all: there is nothing else than I, nothing

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without Me. I support this entire universe with a single degree of my illimitable power and an infinitesimal portion of my fathomless spirit; all these worlds are only sparks, hints, glintings of the I Am eternal and immeasurable.

THE THEORY OF THE VIBHUTI

The importance of this chapter of the Gita is very much greater than appears at first view or to an eye of prepossession which is looking into the text only for the creed of the last transcendence and the detached turning of the human soul away from the world to a distant Absolute. The message of the Gita is the gospel of the Divinity in man who by force of an increasing union unfolds himself out of the veil of the lower Nature, reveals to the human soul his cosmic spirit, reveals his absolute transcendences, reveals himself in man and in all beings. The potential outcome here of this union, this divine Yoga, man growing towards the Godhead, the Godhead manifest in the human soul and to the inner human vision, is our liberation from limited ego and our elevation to the higher nature of a divine humanity. For dwelling in this greater spiritual nature and not in the mortal web, the tangled complexity of the three gunas, man, one with God by knowledge, love and will and the giving up of his whole being into the Godhead, is able indeed to rise to the absolute Transcendence, but also to act upon the world, no longer in ignorance, but in the right relation of the individual to the Supreme, in the truth of the Spirit, fulfilled in immortality, for God in the world and no longer for the ego. To call Arjuna to this action, to make him aware of the being and

power that he is and of the Being and Power whose will acts through him, is the purpose of the embodied Godhead. To this end the divine Krishna is his charioteer; to this end there came upon him that great discouragement and deep dissatisfaction with the lesser human motives of his work; to substitute for them the larger spiritual motive this revelation is given to him in the supreme moment of the work to which he has been appointed. The vision of the World-Purusha and the divine command to action is the culminating point to which he was being led. That is already imminent; but without the knowledge now given to him through the Vibhuti-Yoga it would not bring with it its full meaning.

The mystery of the world-existence is in part revealed by the Gita. In part for who shall exhaust its infinite depths or what creed or philosophy say that it has enlightened in a narrow space or shut up in a brief system all the significance of the cosmic miracle? But so far as is essential for the Gita's purpose, it is revealed to us. We have the way of the origination of the world from God, the immanence of the Divine in it and its immanence in the Divine, the essential unity of all existence, the relation of the human soul obscured in Nature to the Godhead, its awakening to self-knowledge, its birth into a greater consciousness, its ascension into its own spiritual heights. But when this new self-vision and consciousness have been acquired in place of the original ignorance, what will be the

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liberated man's view of the world around him, his attitude towards the cosmic manifestation of which he has now the central secret? He will have first the knowledge of the unity of existence and the regarding eye of that knowledge. He will see all around him as souls and forms and powers of the one divine Being. Henceforward that vision will be the starting-point of all the inward and outward operations of his consciousness; it will be the fundamental seeing, the spiritual basis of all his actions. He will see all things and every creature living, moving and acting in the One, contained in the divine and eternal Existence. But he will also see that One as the Inhabitant in all, their Self, the essential Spirit within them without whose secret presence in their conscious nature they could not at all live, move or act and without whose will, power, sanction or sufferance not one of their movements at any moment would be in the least degree possible. Themselves too, their soul, mind, life and physical mould he will see only as a result of the power, will and force of this one Self and Spirit. All will be to him a becoming of this one universal Being. Their consciousness he will see to be derived entirely from its consciousness, their power and will to be drawn from and dependent on its power and will, their partial phenomenon of nature to be a resultant from its greater divine Nature, whether in the immediate actuality of things it strikes the mind as a manifestation or a disguise, a figure or a disfi-

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gurement of the Godhead. No untoward or bewildering appearance of things will in any smallest degree diminish or conflict with the completeness of this vision. It is the essential foundation of the greater consciousness into which he has arisen, it is the indispensable light that has opened around him and the one perfect way of seeing, the one Truth that makes all others possible.

But the world is only a partial manifestation of the Godhead, it is not itself that Divinity. The Godhead is infinitely greater than any natural manifestation can be. By his very infinity, by its absolute freedom he exists beyond all possibility of integral formulation in any scheme of worlds or extension of cosmic Nature, however wide, complex, endlessly varied this and every world may seem to us,—*nâsti anto vistarasya me*,—however to our finite view infinite. Therefore beyond cosmos the eye of the liberated spirit will see the utter Divine. Cosmos he will see as a figure drawn from the Divinity who is beyond all figure, a constant minor term in the absolute existence. Every relative and finite he will see as a figure of the divine Absolute and Infinite, and both beyond all finites and through each finite he will arrive at that alone, see always that beyond each phenomenon and natural creature and relative action and every quality and every happening; looking at each of these things and beyond it, he will find in the Divinity its spiritual significance.